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V. THE INDIAN LEGEND OF HIAWATHA

To the world of letters the legend of Hiawatha connotes Longfellow, without whose popular treatment it would be as little known as the adventures of Coyote or Raven, or a dozen other culture heroes of the Red Men. Since Longfellow's poem is the only form in which American Indian legend has reached the great mass of civilized men, the question of its authenticity must present itself to the general reader of American literature no less than to the student of literary relations. Do sixty years of active work on the part of ethnologists and folk-lorists show that Longfellow's *Song of Hiawatha* is truly Indian in theme, atmosphere, and spirit? To essay an answer to this question is the purpose of the present study.

The conditions under which the poem was composed are known to all readers of Longfellow's journal. As early as 1850 we find him entertaining an Ojibwa chief at tea.¹ On June 22, 1854 we read of his intention to write an Indian poem by weaving the tradition into a whole.² He read Schoolcraft's voluminous work on the Indians and found difficulty in selecting from its ill-digested material.³ He first planned to call the poem "Manabozho" after the real name of the hero of the legends, though later, following Schoolcraft's erroneous statement that Manabozho and Hiawatha are identical, he changed the name.⁴ Shortly before beginning work on the poem he read with great pleasure the Finnish epic, *Kalevala*.⁵ It is from this poem, as he tells his correspondents later, that he adopted the meter which is so characteristic a feature of the *Hiawatha*.⁶

¹ Samuel Longfellow, *Life of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow* (Boston, 1893), ii, p. 182.

² *Ibid.*, ii, p. 273.

³ *Ibid.*, ii, p. 273 (June 26, 1854).

⁴ *Ibid.*, ii, p. 273 (June 28, 1854).

⁵ *Ibid.*, ii, p. 273 (June 5, 1854).

⁶ *Ibid.*, ii, pp. 298, 303.

When controversy arose after the poem was published and it was suggested that the story issued entirely from the author's imagination, Longfellow declared: "I can give chapter and verse for these legends. Their chief value is that they *are* Indian legends."⁷ Although, as will appear, he fails to be wholly faithful to the Indian spirit, and although he has selected his material so as to produce a unity that the original will not warrant, his statement is literally true. His chief source lies in the several works of Schoolcraft. The parallels between incidents in the poem and the sources are in many cases indicated in Longfellow's notes. In the exhaustive study of Dr. Broilo⁸ an original has been discovered for almost every fact in the poem. In so far as the poet departs from the real legend, it is always due to his being misled by a statement of Schoolcraft.

A good example of this is seen in the error, already mentioned, in the naming of the hero. Schoolcraft had asserted that Manabozho, the demigod of the Ojibwa and their Algonquian kinsmen, is identical with the Iroquois Hiawatha, although in fact, as Mr. Hewitt points out in his study of the Iroquois Hiawatha, there is not a point of resemblance between them.⁹ Manabozho, is the hero of the tales of the Ojibwa of the Lake Superior region, and with greater or less divergence both in name and character, of all the Algonquian tribes from Nova Scotia to the Rocky Mountains.¹⁰ He is endowed with the qualities now of a god, now of an ordinary mortal, now of a trickster and dupe, and now, in transforma-

⁷ *Op. cit.*, ii, p. 287.

⁸ F. Broilo, *Die Quellen des Longfellow's Song of Hiawatha*. In so far as I have checked its results, this study of Longfellow's sources appears to be thoroughly and accurately done. As will be seen, the purpose of the present paper is quite different from that of Broilo: it is to ascertain the present status of the Hiawatha legend among the Indians.

⁹ J. B. N. Hewitt, "Hiawatha," *Handbook of American Indians* (Bulletin Bureau of American Ethnology, xxx, part i, p. 546).

¹⁰ J. B. N. Hewitt, "Nanabozho," *ibid.*, part ii, p. 19; H. B. Alexander, *The Mythology of All Races*—vol. x, *North American*, pp. 38 ff.; also the various references given in notes 12 and 14 below.

tion, of a great rabbit. Hiawatha, on the other hand, was an historical character, an Iroquois statesman of the Mohawk tribe, who flourished about the year 1570. It is to him that the Iroquois owe their League and much of the peace and civilization which characterized them from the first arrival of Europeans.¹¹ For the confusion of this Iroquois lawgiver with the Ojibwa demigod the romantic and unscientific enthusiasm of Schoolcraft is solely responsible. As a result of this confusion, *The Song of Hiawatha* contains not a single fact or legend relating to the historical Hiawatha, but deals instead with the Ojibwa myth of Manabozho. It becomes our problem, accordingly, to determine how nearly his treatment of the legend represents the actual myth as two generations of investigators have enabled us to piece it together.

The legends of the Ojibwa have in recent years been studied with especial thoroughness,¹² both the tales which are

¹¹ Hewitt, "Hiawatha," *loc. cit.*

¹² Writings available to Longfellow were: S. G. Goodrich, *Manners, Customs and Antiquities of the Indians of North and South America* (Boston, 1845); John G. E. Heckewelder, *An Account of the History, Manners and Customs of the Indian Nations who once inhabited Pennsylvania and the Neighboring States* (Philadelphia, 1819); H. R. Schoolcraft, (a) *Algic Researches*, 2 v. (New York, 1839), (b) *Onéota, or the Indian in his Wigwam*, etc. (New York and London, 1845), (c) *Historical and Statistical Information respecting the History, Condition and Prospects of the Indian Tribes of the United States*, parts i-vi (Philadelphia, 1851-7); John Tanner, *Narrative of Captivity and Adventures among the Indians*, etc. (New York, 1830). Longfellow also used several other works not particularly related to the Ojibwa or other Algonquin tribes, especially the following: Catlin, *Letters and Notes on the Manners, Customs and Conditions of the North American Indians*, 2 v. (New York and London, 1844); Mrs. Mary H. Eastman, *Dahcotah, or Life and Legends of the Sioux around Ft. Snelling* (New York, 1849). In addition to these sources, he picked up information in many miscellaneous ways, most of them oral. See Broilo, *op. cit.*

Subsequent collections of Ojibwa myth are: William Carson, "Ojibwa Tales," *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, xxx, p. 491; A. F. Chamberlain, (a) "A Mississauga Legend of Nanibojo," *ibid.*, v, p. 291, (b) "Tales of the Mississaugas," *ibid.*, ii, 141, (c) "Nanibozhu amongst the Otchipwe, Mississaugas and other Algonkian Tribes," *ibid.*, iv, p. 193; Albert E. Jenks,

in general circulation and those which form a part of the initiation rites of the Grand Medicine Lodge.¹³ From these myths, supplemented by those of closely related tribes,¹⁴ we can construct a generalized form of the legend of Manabozho, both as a culture hero and as a trickster and dupe.

"The Bear Maiden," *ibid.*, xv, p. 33; William Jones, (a) "Ojibwa Tales from the North Shore of Lake Superior," *ibid.*, xxix, p. 368, (b) *Ojibwa Texts*, edited by Truman Michelson (Publications of the American Ethnological Society, vol. vii—part 1, Leyden, 1917, part 2, New York, 1919); J. B. de Josselin de Jong, *Original Odjibwe-Texts, with English Translation, Notes, and Vocabulary* (Leipzig and Berlin, 1913); J. O. Kinneman, "Chippeway Legends," *American Antiquarian*, xxxii, p. 96; Julia Knight, "Ojibwa Tales from Sault Ste. Marie, Mich.," *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, xxvi, p. 91; Col. G. E. Laidlaw, "Ojibwa Myths and Tales," *Ontario Archeological Reports*, 1914, p. 77, 1915, p. 71, 1916, p. 84, 1918, p. 74 (continued in separate reprint issued by the author); Truman Michelson "Ojibwa Tales," *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, xxiv, p. 249; Paul Radin, *Some Myths and Tales of the Ojibwa of Southeastern Ontario* (Canadian Geological Survey, Anthropological Series, ii, Ottawa, 1914); H. R. Schoolcraft, *The Myth of Hiawatha and other Oral Legends*, etc. (Philadelphia and London, 1856); Alanson Skinner, Manuscript (Ojibwa Tales) cited in Skinner and Satterlee, *Folklore of the Menominee Indians*, *passim*; Harlan I. Smith, "Some Ojibwa Myths and Traditions, *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, xix, 215; F. G. Speck, *Myths and Folk-Lore of the Timiskaming Algonquin and Timagami Ojibwa* (Canadian Geological Survey, Anthropological Series, viii, Ottawa, 1915).

¹³ See Walter J. Hoffman, *The Midewiwin or Grand Medicine Lodge of the Ojibwa* (Report Bureau of American Ethnology, vii, Washington, 1896).

¹⁴ The bibliography of Algonquian myth is very extensive. Collections cited in this paper are the following: Andrew J. Blackbird, *Complete both Early and Late History of the Ottawa and Chippewa Indians of Michigan* (Harbor Springs, Mich., 1897); Rev. Father DeSmet, *Oregon Missions and Travels over the Rocky Mountains in 1845-46* (New York, 1847); J. W. Fewkes, "Contributions to Passamaquoddy Folklore," *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, iii, 265; G. B. Grinnell, *Blackfoot Lodge Tales* (New York, 1903); Stansbury Hagar, "Weather and Seasons in Micmac Mythology," *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, x, p. 101; Walter J. Hoffman, *The Menomini Indians* (Report Bureau of American Ethnology, xiv, Washington, 1896); E. Jack, "Maliseet Legends," *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, viii, p. 193; William Jones, (a) *Fox Texts* (Publications of the American Ethnological Society, i, Leyden, 1907), (b) *Kickapoo Tales* (same series, ix, translated by Truman Michelson, Leyden, 1915), (c) "Episodes in the Culture-Hero Myth of the Sauks and Foxes," *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, xiv, p. 225; A. L. Kroeber,

Manabozho is sent to the tribes by Gitche Manitou, the Great Spirit, in order that he may bring them culture and peace.¹⁵ Most of these gifts were made permanent through the founding by Manabozho of the Midewiwin, or Grand Medicine Lodge, where the initiate receives them as they have been handed down.¹⁶

The legends of the birth of Manabozho—in animal form, the Great Rabbit—are numerous and quite impossible to harmonize. Only the principal versions will here be mentioned. In one of these, Nokomis ("The Earth") is Manabozho's grandmother. She forbids her daughter to look at the sun. The daughter, however, accidentally sees the sun reflected in water and as a result magically conceives.¹⁷ According to other versions it is the wind, as in Longfellow, that causes the magic conception.¹⁸ As to the manner of the hero's birth, there is a great divergence in the different legends, depending on the number of brothers born at the same time. In some forms of the legend, there are only the

"Cheyenne Tales," *ibid.*, xiii, p. 161; Charles G. Leland, *Algonkin Legends of New England* (Boston, 1884); Walter McClintock, *The Old North Trail, or Life, Legends, and Religion of the Blackfeet Indians* (London, 1910); W. H. Mechling, *Malecile Tales* (Canadian Geological Survey, Anthropological Series, iv, Ottawa, 1914); S. T. Rand, *Legends of the Micmac* (New York and London, 1894); Frank Russell, *Explorations in the Far North* (University of Iowa Publication, Iowa City, 1908); Alanson Skinner, *Notes on the Eastern Cree and Northern Saulteaux* (Anthropological Papers, American Museum of Natural History, ix, pp. 1-178, New York, 1911); Alanson Skinner and John V. Satterlee, *Folklore of the Menomini Indians* (same series, xiii, pp. 219-546, New York, 1915); F. G. Speck, "Some Naskapi Myths from Little Whale River," *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, xxviii, p. 70; Clark Wissler and D. C. Duval, *Mythology of the Blackfoot Indians* (Anthropological Papers, American Museum of Natural History, ii, pp. 1-164, New York, 1908).

¹⁵ See Hoffman, *Midewiwin*, p. 175.

¹⁶ See Hoffman, *Midewiwin*, *passim*.

¹⁷ Speck, *Timagami Ojibwa*, p. 28.

¹⁸ DeJong, *Original Odjibwe-Texts*, p. 5; Skinner and Satterlee, *Menomini Folklore*, p. 240; Radin, *Ojibwa Myths*, p. 12; Jones, *Ojibwa Texts*, p. 3.

hero and his brother Chipiapos, the Wolf;¹⁹ in others there is also "Flint"²⁰ and in another group a fourth brother, Wabasso, the White Rabbit.²¹ The brothers consult before their birth as to their method of being delivered from their mother's body, and Wolf (or more usually Flint) bursts through her side and kills her.

A quite different version tells how Nokomis, the Earth, brings forth Flint, who makes a bowl which gradually fills with blood and becomes Wabus, or Manabozho, the Rabbit.²² A combination of the myths recounts the story of the death of both Manabozho's mother and brother at the time of his birth. Nokomis, the grandmother, hides the survivor under a bowl, and after four days of mourning discovers the White Rabbit, Manabozho.²³

After Manabozho becomes a young man, he goes to revenge his mother's death. In some versions, the expedition is directed, as in Longfellow, against the West Wind, the betrayer of his mother.²⁴ In others it is against the rebellious brother who has killed her.²⁵ Manabozho defeats his adversary by deception, as the poem records. He exchanges confidences as to the one thing that will kill him. In exchange for his lie, his opponent tells him the truth, and is thus defeated, though not until a mighty conflict has been waged. Signs of this great battle are still to be seen in the mountains and huge piles of rocks that were thrown about. This battle is but the first of the heroic struggles which he carried on against the evil manitous who in the olden times used their cunning to the injury of men. The great

¹⁹ The Micmac version: cf. Rand, *Micmac Legends*, No. 60; Leland, *Algonkin Legends*, p. 15; Jack, *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, viii, p. 194.

²⁰ Skinner and Satterlee, *Menomini Folklore*, p. 241; Blackbird, *Ottawa and Chippeway Indians*, p. 52. Cf. Hewitt, *Iroquois Cosmology*, (Report Bureau of American Ethnology, xxi) 185 ff.

²¹ DeSmet, *Oregon Missions and Travels*, p. 344 (Potawatomi).

²² Hoffman, *Menomini Indians*, p. 87.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 114; Jones, *Ojibwa Texts*, p. 3.

²⁴ Radin, *Ojibwa Myths*, p. 12.

²⁵ DeSmet, *loc. cit.* (Potawatomi); Leland, *Algonkin Legends*, p. 14 (Micmac); Jack, *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, viii, p. 194 (Micmac).

animal-manitous he reduces in power until men can prevail against them.²⁶ The winds he places in their quarters of the world, and he assigns to them their duties.²⁷

One of the most widely known stories of the Manabozho cycle is that of Chipiapos, the Wolf, the hero's brother, who in spite of warning, ventures on the ice of Lake Superior, where he is drowned by the wicked Manitous of the water.²⁸ Manabozho weeps for him so long that his friends, the *good* Manitous, make a lodge for him and deliver to him the secrets of the medicine man. They bring Chipiapos back from the dead, but permit him to come no further than the opening in the lodge, where they give him a live coal and send him to rule over the land of the dead. This live coal is said to be the symbol of immortality. The form of the story just recounted is that told in the initiation rites of the Ojibwa to explain the origins of their Grand Medicine Lodge.²⁹ It is also the version which Longfellow uses. Other forms of the myth³⁰ (sometimes in connection with the one just given)³¹

²⁶ Cf. Jones, *Fox Texts*, pp. 337 ff.; Jones, *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, xiv, 225 ff.; Hoffman, *Menomini Indians*, pp. 91, 93, 114; DeSmet, *op. cit.*, p. 244 (Potawatomi).

²⁷ DeSmet, *op. cit.*, p. 344 (Potawatomi); Speck, *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, xxviii, p. 70 (Naskapi).

²⁸ Skinner and Satterlee, *Menomini Folklore*, p. 253; Schoolcraft, *Hiawatha*, p. 35; Skinner manuscript, cited in Skinner and Satterlee, *op. cit.*, p. 519 (Ojibwa); DeJong, *Odjibwa Texts*, p. 13; Carson, *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, xxx, 491 (Ojibwa); Hoffman, *Menomini Indians*, pp. 87, 115, 116 (the fullest version); cf. Jones, *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, xiv, 225 ff. (Sauk and Fox); Jones, *Ojibwa Texts*, p. 15.

²⁹ Hoffman, *Menomini Indians*, pp. 88, 115; Drake, *Indian Tribes*, p. 57; DeSmet, *op. cit.*, pp. 344-5 (Ojibwa); Jones, *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, xiv, 225 ff. (Sauk and Fox).

³⁰ Skinner and Satterlee, *Menomini Folklore*, p. 260; Skinner manuscript, cited *ibid.*, p. 520 (Plains Ojibwa and Cree); Schoolcraft, *Hiawatha*, p. 40 (Ojibwa); Skinner, *Northern Saulteaux*, p. 174; Russell, *Explorations in the Far North*, p. 207 (Cree); Jones, *Fox Texts*, p. 355; Jones, *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, xiv, pp. 225 ff. (Sauk and Fox); DeJong, *Odjibwa-Texts*, p. 14; Lowie, *Northern Shoshone*, p. 241; Dorsey, *The Thegiha Language*, p. 240 (Omaha).

³¹ Cf. Jones, *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, xiv, pp. 225 ff. (Sauk and Fox).

tell how Manabozho masks as a doctor and kills some of Chipiapos' slayers. In other tales he turns himself into a tree to deceive them and shoots them while they are playing ball or la crosse.³² Their evil companions retaliate by causing a flood. To escape this, Manabozho takes refuge in a tree, which magically grows to four times its original height.³³ When the flood finally covers the face of the earth, he sends down animals, one after the other, to try to bring up soil. One finally succeeds in bringing a small amount in its paws, and with this the new earth is formed.³⁴

The story of how Manabozho allows himself to be swallowed by the Great Sturgeon and how he kills him from within is found in many tribes in practically the form Longfellow has used.³⁵

In the more recent versions of the legend, some of the myths told of the hero by Longfellow are assigned to other characters. Such is the fact in which Mondamin, the corn, appears.³⁶ Aside from this fact, Longfellow follows the legend exactly. The story of the dropping of Nokomis from the sky to the earth through the treachery of a jealous

³² Schoolcraft, *Hiawatha*, p. 38 (Ojibwa); DeJong, *Odjibwa-Texts*, p. 14; Skinner, *Northern Saulteaux*, p. 174; Russell, *Explorations*, p. 206 (Woods Cree); Blackbird, *Ottawa and Chippeway Indians*, p. 54 (Ottawa); Skinner and Satterlee, *Menomini Folklore*, p. 255; Skinner manuscript, cited *ibid.*, p. 519 (Plains Ojibwa); Hoffman, *Menomini Indians*, p. 133; Radin, *Ojibwa Myths*, pp. 20, 23. Cf. Jones, *Fox Texts*, p. 353.

³³ See the Schoolcraft, DeJong, Skinner manuscript, Radin, and Hoffman references in note 32. Cf. also Carson, *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, xxx, 490 (Ojibwa).

³⁴ This incident occurs in the folk-lore of the Indian tribes of every part of North America. For exhaustive references, see *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, xxx, p. 422. In connection with this story it occurs in the references given in note 33.

³⁵ Skinner and Satterlee, *Menomini Folklore*, p. 272; Hoffman, *Menomini Indians*, pp. 88, 125 (latter exactly as in Longfellow); Schoolcraft, *Hiawatha*, p. 21 (Ojibwa); Carson, *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, xxx, p. 492; Blackbird, *op. cit.*, p. 55 (Ottawa); Mooney, *Cherokee Myths*, p. 320; DeJong, *Odjibwe-Texts*, pp. 10, 11. Cf. Skinner, *Eastern Cree*, p. 101.

³⁶ See Chamberlain, *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, ii, p. 142 (Mississauga).

rival is told in several tribes,³⁷ but concerns a woman quite unrelated to the hero-cycle. The adventures of Pau-Pau-Kee-Wis, described in the poem, are ordinarily told of Manabozho himself.³⁸ In the legend which tells how Fisher let out the summer weather, one recent version confirms Longfellow, but Manabozho is usually the hero.³⁹

Several stories, such as that of "The Son of the Evening Star" and of the visit of the ghosts to Hiawatha, were adapted by the poet from Schoolcraft, but do not appear in later collections. There are, on the other hand, a number of widely-distributed myths which find no place in Longfellow's poem.

Among these is the account of Manabozho's visit to the land of shadows to destroy "The Ghost Gambler." The hero borrows the eyes of the owl in order to see in the dark and with their help liberates the victims who have fallen into the power of the monster.⁴⁰ One of the best known of the whole group of tales of Manabozho is that concerning the men who make a journey to him and ask for gifts. He grants their prayers for prowess, wealth, and success in love. The man who asks for eternal life, however, is rewarded by being turned into a stone. Manabozho gives the others the power of making their return with magic swiftness.⁴¹

³⁷ Jones, *Fox Texts*, p. 101; Schoolcraft, *Oneota*, p. 116 (Ojibwa); Lowie, *Assiniboine Tales* (Siouan stock), *Miscellaneous Tales*, No. 4.

³⁸ One of these incidents is the carrying of the hero by birds or the giving of wings to him. For references see Skinner and Satterlee, *Menomini Folklore*, pp. 520-522. Another concerns the catching of game by the hero, who feigns death. References for the latter are: Skinner and Satterlee, *Menominee Folklore*, p. 292; Skinner manuscript, cited *ibid.*, p. 521 (Eastern Dakota, Iowa, and Ojibwa); Jones, *Kickapoo Tales*, p. 129 (Sauk, Fox, and Kickapoo); Jones, *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, xiv, pp. 225 ff. (Fox); Mooney, *Cherokee Myths*, p. 293; Dorsey, *Thegiha Language*, p. 77 (Omaha); Lowie, *Assiniboine Tales*, p. 107; Radin, *Ojibwa Myths*, p. 19.

³⁹ Carson, *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, xxx, p. 492 (Ojibwa); Skinner and Satterlee, *Menomini Folklore*, p. 243; Hoffman, *Menomini Indians*, p. 126; DeJong, *Odjibwe-Texts*, pp. 6, 7.

⁴⁰ Hoffman, *Midewiwin*, p. 280 (Ojibwa).

⁴¹ Skinner and Satterlee, *Menomini Folklore*, p. 487; Skinner manuscript,

In the later collections the final departure of Manabozho appears in many different forms, but they nearly all agree in saying that he is now living in the land of the Northern Lights and that some day he will return to minister to his people.⁴² Longfellow's joining of the departure of his hero with the arrival of the white man does not seem to be a part of the Indian legend.

In exercising the function of selecting incidents to make an artistic production, Longfellow has omitted all that aspect of the Manabozho saga which considers the culture hero as a trickster. The double character of leader of the people and foolish dupe does not appear to strike the Indian as incongruous,⁴³ but Longfellow would undoubtedly have spoiled his poem for white readers had he included the trickster incidents.

A few of these stories concern Manabozho's grandmother, Nokomis, and her bear lover.⁴⁴ Others tell of the hero's capturing ducks by inducing them to dance blindfold,⁴⁵ of his burning himself at the campfire while they are cooking, of his climbing a tree to hold limbs apart out of pure pity

cited *ibid.*, p. 538 (Plains Ojibwa); Hoffman, *Menomini Indians*, pp. 118-20, 206; Jack, *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, viii, p. 193 (Maliseet); Rand, *Micmac Legends*, Nos. 35, 43, etc.; Hagar, *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, x, p. 101 (Micmac); Jones, *Fox Texts*, p. 333; Jones, *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, xxix, 389 (Ojibwa); Schoolcraft, *Algic Researches*, ii, p. 51 (Ojibwa); Leland, *Algonkin Legends*, p. 98.

⁴² Cf. Leland, *Algonkin Legends*, pp. 66, 130; Hoffman, *Menomini Indians*, p. 199; Jack, *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, viii, 193 (Maliseet); Jones, *ibid.*, xiv, pp. 225 ff. (Sauk and Fox); Speck, *ibid.*, xxviii, p. 60 (Micmac); Laidlaw, *Ontario Arch. Rep.*, xxvii, p. 85 (Ojibwa).

⁴³ Radin, *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, xxvii, p. 359.

⁴⁴ Hoffman, *Menomini Indians*, p. 174; Skinner and Satterlee, *Menomini Folklore*, p. 249; Schoolcraft, *Hiawatha*, p. 27 (Ojibwa). With slight variations the story is very widespread, especially among the plains tribes. Cf. Dorsey, *Thegiha Language*, p. 19 (Omaha).

⁴⁵ There is hardly an Algonquian tribe that does not tell this series of trickster incidents. Scores of references could be cited. For those of the closely related Algonquian tribes see Skinner and Satterlee, *Menomini Folklore*, pp. 520-522.

because they are creaking, and of the loss of his feast while he is thus ingloriously occupied. Other stories relate different schemes for capturing game, or various vain attempts which he makes to imitate his companions. One, which Longfellow has used as a suggestion, tells of the trickster's being carried aloft by birds and dropped into a hollow tree.

It is this latter type of tale that the Indians delight to tell of Manabozho in their ordinary gatherings. For the initiation ceremonies of the Midewiwin, or Grand Medicine Lodge, they reserve the more serious part of their mythology.⁴⁶ Even here, however, the trickster element is not entirely lacking; so that the purely serious legend given in the poem cannot be said to represent the incongruous native myth as told to any group.

Broadly speaking, Longfellow had all the elements of the Manabozho cycle at his disposal. In order to give his poem wide artistic appeal, he selected those incidents which he felt to be appropriate to the hero in his character of a man and discarded all those in which he is thought of in animal form, as the Great Rabbit; he used the serious incidents and omitted all those in which Manabozho appears as an undignified trickster.

After all, a comparatively small proportion of *The Song of Hiawatha* is concerned with the Manabozho myth itself. The poet has, in the first place, all but completely humanized the demigod. Then around him he has woven, usually with a high degree of accuracy, typical experiences of Indian life. He has used such occasions as talks between grandmother and grandson, or wedding celebrations for the telling of such Indian tales as do not relate to the hero himself.⁴⁷ In this way he has been able to bring together in the poem a large variety of tales, myths, and customs.

Aside from this principle of selecting and recombining his Indian materials, Longfellow has used several devices by

⁴⁶ See Hoffman, *Menomini Indians*, pp. 161-2.

⁴⁷ See *Life of H. W. Longfellow*, vol. ii, p. 301 (Letter from Schoolcraft to Longfellow).

means of which he makes his poem conform to established standards of taste. He has improved his material by making it more unified, more conventionally poetic and romantic than he found it. From the Iroquois he took the euphonious name of his hero; and from the Finnish epic, *The Kalevala*, he adopted his metrical form and received suggestion for some of his best known lines.⁴⁸ It was also perhaps the same poem that brought vividly before him the device of grouping a mass of incoherent legends around the figure of a central demigod.

His greatest liberties with the legend, however, were with its spirit rather than with details. He introduced into the myth the element of romance to such an extent that to most readers the outstanding fact of the poem is the love making of Hiawatha and Minnehaha, which is entirely the poet's invention. Moreover, he has time and again insisted upon sentiments which form little or no part of Indian feeling, but which do appeal to the civilized reader. This romantic treatment, combined with the omission of all the ignoble qualities and the stressing of all the noble in his

⁴⁸ For example, compare the following passages:

Lo! the time has come for Aino
From this cruel world to hasten,
To the kingdom of Tuoni,
To the realm of the departed,
To the isle of the hereafter.

—*Kalevala*, Rune 4 (Crawford's translation).

Thus departed Hiawatha,
Hiawatha the Beloved,
In the glory of the sunset,
In the purple mists of evening,
To the regions of the home-wind,
Of the Northwest wind Keewadin,
To the islands of the Blessed,
To the kingdom of Ponemah,
To the Land of the Hereafter!

—*Hiawatha*, canto 21, end.

Broilo cites other interesting parallels.

hero, has given a dignity and glamor to the poem which has delighted three generations of readers. There can be no doubt, however, that Longfellow has in this very way done violence both to the original myth and to the spirit of the life which he depicts in *The Song of Hiawatha*.

STITH THOMPSON